

# **THE STORY OF THE JONES HOUSE IN PONTIAC, ILLINOIS**

by

Dale C. Maley

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The Story of the Jones House in Pontiac, Illinois

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## **CHAPTER 2**

### **1790 to ????**

#### **John Dehner Family History**

Samuel Mooney was born on December 11, 1790, in Ohio. Jane Jones was born in 1799 in Kentucky. Samuel Mooney married Jane Jones around 1818 in Ohio. Samuel was 27 and Jane was 19 years of age when they married. Samuel and Jane Mooney had nine children. Unfortunately, Samuel Mooney died on April 5, 1836 at the age of 45 in Carroll County, Indiana.








When her husband died, Jane Mooney was 37 years old. Jane's children and their ages when Samuel Mooney died are shown below.

Malinda	22
Jonas	19
Mary	19
Rebecca	17
Nancy	14
John	11
Obediah	8
Peter	5
Susan	5

Widow Jane Mooney had to raise six children under the age of 18 when her husband died. Eighth months after her husband died, Jane Mooney married John Dehner. John was born in 1807 in Prussia. John Dehner emigrated from Prussia to Indiana in 1835. In 1871, Prussia became part of Germany.

On December 13, 1836, John Dehner married the widow Jane Mooney in Carroll County, Indiana. John was 29 and Jane was 37 years of age when they married.

According to the U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management online database, John Dehner purchased seven different tracts of land in Carroll County, Indiana, in 1837 and 1838. This land purchases totaled 600 acres and he paid cash for the land as opposed to using military veteran land patents.

Names <sup>†</sup>	Date	Doc #	State	Meridian	Twp - Rng	Aliquots	Sec. #	County
 DEHNER, JOHN	3/30/1837	26358	IN	2nd PM	024N - 002W	SE¼	34	Carroll
 DEHNER, JOHN	3/30/1837	26359	IN	2nd PM	024N - 002W	E½SW¼	34	Carroll
 DEHNER, JOHN	3/30/1837	26361	IN	2nd PM	023N - 002W	S½NW¼	9	Carroll
 DEHNER, JOHN	5/15/1837	28593	IN	2nd PM	024N - 002W	E½NE¼	34	Carroll
					024N - 002W	NW¼SW¼	34	Carroll
 DEHNER, JOHN	5/15/1837	29115	IN	2nd PM	023N - 002W	W½SW¼	10	Carroll
 DEHNER, JOHN	5/15/1837	29116	IN	2nd PM	023N - 002W	NE¼SE¼	9	Carroll
 DEHNER, JOHN	9/10/1838	30383	IN	2nd PM	024N - 001W	SW¼SE¼	31	Carroll

In 1840, John and Jane Dehner had a son they named Joseph A. Dehner in Tippecanoe County, Indiana. John Dehner was shown in the 1840 U.S. Census. In his household of five people, there was one male under age five, one male between ten and fourteen, and one female between ages five and nine. His family was living in Tippecanoe County, Indiana. John was 43 and Jane was 41 when their son was born.

In the 1850 U.S. Census, the John Dehner family still lived in Tippecanoe County. Son Joseph Dehner was eleven years old and lived at home. John Dehner gave his occupation as selling gold.

### First Livingston County Fair Held in 1850

The 1878 history book recounts the history and development of the Livingston County Fair.

### THE LIVINGSTON COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ASSOCIATION.

The earliest attempts at popular exhibitions of the agricultural and mechanical products of the county were held about the year 1850, in the Court House Square. The principal mover in these exhibitions was Mr. Samuel Ladd. But few articles were exhibited; and at the close of the day's entertainment, a hat was passed around to raise means to defray expenses.

These primitive fairs generally went by the name of ." rope fairs," from the fact that a rope was stretched around -the articles shown. These fairs were held at irregular intervals until 1856, when, at a meeting of several gentlemen interested in the subject, a permanent organization was effected.

This meeting was held at the Court House, on, Jan. 5, 1856, at which meeting Wm. J. Murphy was chosen Chairman. and James Stout, Secretary. A Constitution was submitted and adopted, and the following

officers elected at said meeting : William J. Murphy, President; M. D. Edgington, Vice President; C. B. Ostrander, Vice President; S. McCormick, Vice President; Otis Richardson, Secretary; James Stout, Corresponding Secretary; James M. Perry, Treasurer.

The first County Fair was held in the Fall of 1856, in the Court House Square in Pontiac. No admission fee was charged and a very small list of premiums offered.

On the 18th day of April, 1857, the Board reorganized, and a Constitution was adopted. Section 1 of the Constitution provided that this society shall be called "The Livingston County Agricultural Society." Its objects shall be to improve the condition of agriculture, horticulture, mechanic and household arts. Also, that this Board shall consist of such persons as shall pay into the treasury not less than \$1.00 and \$1.00 annually thereafter. The payment of \$20 or more shall constitute a life member of this society.

The officers of this Board shall consist of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer and a Board of nine Directors (five of whom shall constitute a quorum).

Under this organization twenty fairs were held, with a very good attendance at each. The result has been a growing interest in agricultural, horticultural and mechanical pursuits.

In 1865, the society purchased the old fair grounds, south of the 'Vermilion River, which they furnished with buildings, stalls and a good half-mile track, and which were occupied until the present season.

In 1872: the Legislature passed a law changing the State Agricultural Society to the State Agricultural Board, and giving it certain privileges. The same act provided that any County Agricultural Society forming an organization in compliance with this law would be entitled to \$100 each season a fair was held.

That year, the Livingston County .Agricultural Society changed to the Livingston County Agricultural Board, in compliance with this law, and continued under that organization and name until Jan. 1, 1878. At this date, it was decided to form a stock company, sell the old grounds, purchase new and more desirable grounds and extend the aim and purpose of the society. One thousand shares at \$10 each were decided upon and readily disposed of, thereby creating a fund of \$10,000. This is used in part to defray expenses, insure payment of premiums and to supply any deficiency that may occur.

The grounds comprise fifty-five acres southeast of the city .on the bank of the river. One-third of the grounds are admirably shaded, affording a pleasant retreat. A most excellent one-half-mile track is graded and ready for use. Good buildings, stables and other necessary adjuncts will be at once erected, so that by the Fall meeting-first week of September-every thing will be in readiness. The premiums offered aggregate \$3,000, and an excellent exhibition .is anticipated.

The present officers of the association are as follows: President, W.O. Burleigh; Vice President, Bailey A. Gower; Secretary, A. W. Kellogg; Treasurer, D. C. Eylar; Executive Committee, J. P. Houston, W. P. Corbin, A. E. Sweet, James Marks, C. W. Ament.

A Director from each township in the county is elected by the stockholders for three years. These Directors are divided into three classes, one class going out each year.

### **First Railroad in Pontiac**

The 1878 history book recounts that the first railroad in Livingston County was the Chicago & Mississippi Railroad with tracks running through Pontiac in 1854. This railroad changed names to the Chicago & Alton Railroad and it spurred huge growth in the Pontiac area.

### **John Dehner Family Moves to Pontiac**

Sometime between 1850 and 1858, the John Dehner family moved from Tippecanoe County, Indiana, to Pontiac, Illinois. In 1858, John Dehner bought the land that is now the lot for the Jones House at 314 E. Madison Street. He had a new brick home built at this address in 1858.

In the 1860 Census, John Dehner and his wife Jane lived at Pontiac, Illinois. John listed his occupation as a merchant. John owned \$16,000 of real estate and had a personal estate of \$12,000. His net worth of \$28,000 would be equivalent to \$936,000 in today's dollars.

### **John Dehner & Co. Listed in 1860 Business Directory**

The 1860 Illinois State Business Directory book published a listing for John Dehner & Co. in Pontiac, in Livingston County.

## **John Dehner Involved with Livingston County Fair in 1860**

The April 26, 1860 edition of the Prairie Farmer magazine published an article about John Dehner and the Livingston County Fair.

### **Agricultural Societies**

Livingston County, Illinois —The next annual fair of this society is to be held at Pontiac, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 13<sup>th</sup>. The officers for 1860 are—President, S. L. Manker, Pontiac; Vice-President, Wm. Perry, ditto; Treasurer, John Dehner, ditto; Secretary, Hon. B. P. Babcock, Esmen; Board of Directors, Wm. B. Lyon, Reading; Thos. Mills, Long Point; M. B. Patty, Pontiac; Benj. Walton, Fairbury; T. W. Brydia, Five Mile Grove; G. M. Bedinger, Chenoa; C. B. Ostrander, Avoca.

## 1861 Book Mentions John Dehner and the Livingston County Fair

In 1861, the book titled *Transactions of the Illinois State Agricultural Society with Notices and Proceedings of County Societies* was published by Bailhache & Baker. The report for the 1860 Livingston County Fair is shown below.

### LIVINGSTON COUNTY.

#### REPORT FOR 1860.

##### Officers for 1860 :

*President*—S. L. Manker.

*Vice President*—Wm. Perry.

*Secretary*—B. P. Babcock.

*Treasurer*—John Dehner.

*Directors*—Wm. B. Lyon, M. B. Patty, T. M. Bridy, Benj. Walton, G. M. Bedinger.

The Livingston County Agricultural Society was legally organized in April, 1857, with the following board of officers :

*President*—Otis Richardson.

*Secretary*—S. C. Ladd.

*Treasurer*—Robert Aul.

A committee of five was appointed, at the first meeting, to purchase grounds for the use of the Society. They succeeded in getting ten acres adjoining the town of Pontiac— four of which were inclosed with a board fence seven feet high. The fair was held in October, and the exhibition proved very creditable to all concerned ; but, unfortunately, the purchasing and fitting up of the grounds exhausted the funds, leaving nothing to be appropriated for premiums, which caused dissatisfaction among the exhibitors. The annual address was delivered by M. Medill, of the *Prairie Farmer*.

The election of officers for 1858, took place in April, and resulted as follows :

*President*—Wm. Manlove.

*Vice President*—Austin Henslee.

*Secretary*—S. C. Ladd.

*Treasurer*—Robert Aul.

The fair was held on the 6th and 7th of October. The interest manifested throughout the county inspired high hopes of a successful exhibition, but the opening morning was ushered in with heavy peals of thunder, followed by torrents of rain, which continued to fall through the day. The fair was adjourned over one day, but the visitors were few, and the finances of the Society too low to pay all the premiums.

The address was delivered by Otis Richardson, Esq.

The election of officers for 1859, was held in March, with the following result :

*President*—Wm. Manlove.

*Vice President*—A. Henslee.

*Secretary*—S. L. Manker.

*Treasurer*—John Dehner.

The constitution was so amended as to have the election of officers take place on the last day of the fair. The exhibition commenced on the 28th of September, and continued three days. The attendance was very good, and all seemed pleased. There were 138 entries of vegetables, which were very fine; 100 of horses, some of them blooded stallions; and the trotting elicited great applause. The cattle department was not so full as we could have desired; but, in quality, would have honored an older county than ours. The receipts were ample to pay the premiums and other expenses, which has put the Society in the full confidence of exhibitors.

The address was delivered by S. L. Manker, after which, the Society went into the election of officers as reported above.

### **John Dehner Elected to Pontiac Township Supervisor in 1863**

According to the 1878 history book, John Dehner was elected to be the Pontiac Township Supervisor starting in 1863.

### **Pontiac Township**

In 1857, the county voted to adopt what is known as the Township Organization Act: and accordingly, the township election held in this township took place April 6, 1858.

The election was held at the Court House. Dr. Darius Johnson being called to the chair. A motion was made and carried that Ira Loveless act as Moderator, and Nelson Buck was chosen Clerk. After being sworn by J. W. Remick, the polls were opened and 179 votes polled.



The result of the first election was the choosing of Wm. T. Russell as Supervisor; E. R. Maples, Clerk; S. L. Manker, Assessor; Jerome Garner, Overseer of the Poor; Wm. Manlove, James Nelson and A. D. Eylar, Commissioners of Highways; Jacob Steamer and Adams Morrow, Justices of the Peace; E. H. Masters and Joseph H. Virgin, Constables. Samuel McCormick and James W. Remick were candidates for Collector, and, each receiving 89 votes, a tie was declared. The candidates agreed to a new election, which was held on the 24<sup>th</sup>. The second election brought out a very full vote, Remick receiving 109 and McCormick 91.

The first road authorized by the Commissioners was that known as the Avoca Road, and "extended from the south end of Locust street, in Pontiac, running south, east and south, to a point at the township line, being the southeast corner of the Taylor farm." Five other roads were also authorized and surveyed during the year.

The following shows the names of the principal officers elected at each subsequent township election, and also, the number of votes cast at each:

Date.	Supervisor.	Clerk.	Assessor.	Collector.	Vote.
1858	William T. Russell...	E. R. Maples.....	S. L. Manker.....	James W. Remick....	179
1859	Jonathan Duff.....	R. W. Babcock.....	William Gore.....	C. N. Coe.....	200
1860	Henry Hill.....	A. W. Cowan.....	J. F. Culver.....	H. J. Babcock.....	121
1861	Henry Hill.....	J. R. Wolgamot.....	William Gore.....	J. A. Fellows.....	208
1862	B. W. Gray.....	A. W. Cowan.....	William Gore.....	J. A. Fellows.....	262
1863	John Dehner.....	F. H. Bond.....	S. C. Ladd.....	G. Wolgamot.....	237
1864	John Dehner.....	F. H. Bond.....	S. C. Ladd.....	J. R. Wolgamot.....	186
1865	John Dehner.....	J. W. Smith.....	S. S. Lawrence.....	Robert Kingore.....	214
1866	John Dehner.....	Isaac Aert.....	J. H. Gaff.....	George Fowler.....	292
1867	W. B. Lyon.....	S. S. Lawrence.....	N. Buck.....	H. Tuckerman.....	259
1868	J. Duff.....	J. A. Fellows.....	William Gore.....	Charles Watson.....	387
1869	J. Duff.....	George Pittenger.....	William Gore.....	L. Bancroft.....	378
1870	J. Duff.....	W. H. Jenkins.....	William Perry.....	C. A. Campbell.....	427
1871	R. W. Babcock.....	J. T. Kay.....	William Perry.....	L. G. Goodspeed.....	458
1872	R. W. Babcock.....	J. T. Kay.....	William Perry.....	L. G. Goodspeed.....	462
1873	J. E. Morrow.....	A. W. Cowan.....	William Perry.....	J. H. Smith.....	424
1874	J. E. Morrow.....	A. W. Cowan.....	J. H. Gaff.....	James H. Campbell...	454
1875	J. E. Morrow.....	A. W. Cowan.....	J. H. Gaff.....	John Egan.....	520
1876	J. E. Morrow.....	A. W. Cowan.....	J. H. Gaff.....	John Egan.....	537
1877	J. E. Morrow.....	Z. Winters.....	William Perry.....	S. Mossholder.....	636
1878	J. E. Morrow.....	A. W. Cowan.....	William Perry.....	S. Mossholder.....	648

## John Dehner Involved with Building First Livingston County Jail in 1866

John Dehner was also involved with building the first County Jail at Pontiac. The March 24, 1866 Chicago Tribune published the following notice for John Dehner.

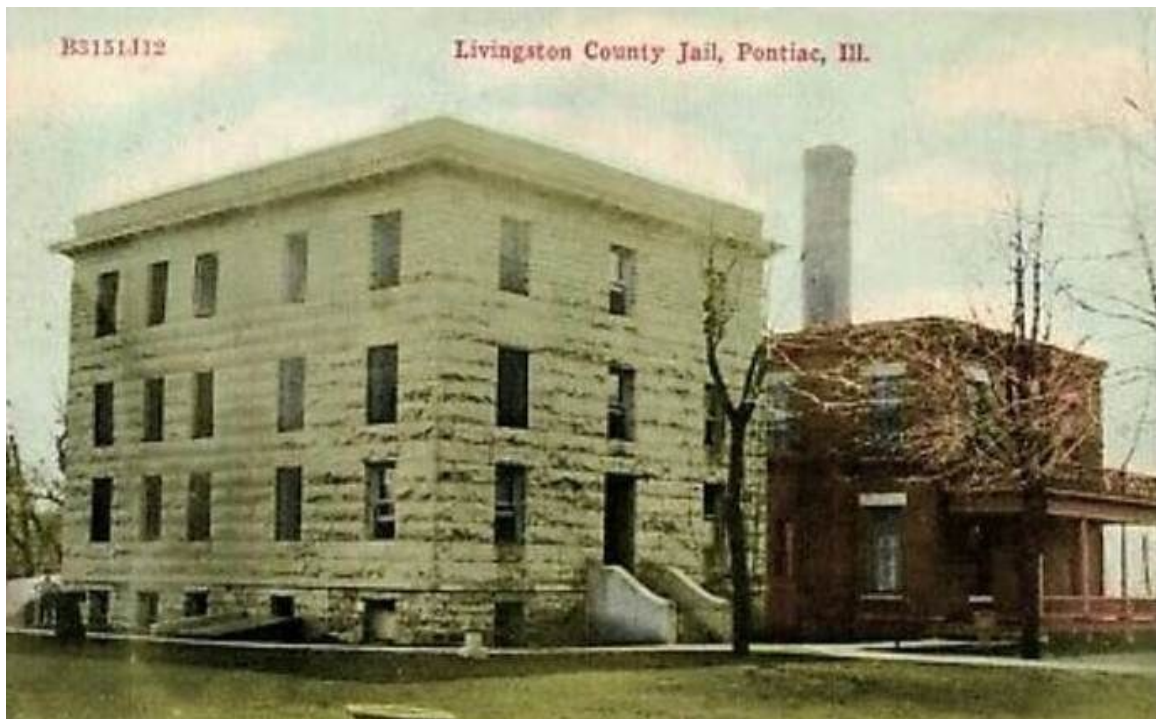
**NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS.**  
Sealed proposals for the building of a jail 36x12 ft., two stories high, with basements, for the County of Livingston, Ill., will be received at the office of the County Clerk, in Pontiac, in said county, up to 2 o'clock p. m., of Tuesday, April 10, 1866, said building to be Joliet stone, and containing 12 cells. Contractors to furnish all the material and have the work completed by the first day of October next, under bonds, the committee reserving the right to reject any or all bids. Plan and specifications can be seen at the office of the County Clerk on and after the 21st of March.

JOHN DEHNER,  
R. F. HOTCHKISS,  
R. R. HARRINGTON

} Building Com.

Pontiac, Ill., March 9, 1866.

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The old Livingston County Jail built in 1866 was torn down in May of 2017.

## **John Dehner Loses Election to Become Livingston County Treasurer in 1866**

The 1878 history book recounts that there was an election in 1866 for Livingston County Treasurer. Wm. B. Fryfe won this election with 1,398 votes. Mr. J. I. Dunlop received 738 votes and John Dehner received 597 votes.

## **John Dehner Involved with Adding a Second Railroad for Pontiac**

The November 28, 1866 Pantagraph published an article about a meeting held in Pontiac.

**Report of Railroad Meeting.**—A meeting having been called by the citizens of Pontiac, at Dehner's Hall, Saturday evening, November 17th, 1866, for the purpose of agitating the subject of a cross Railroad from Elpaso to Kankakee city, or from Fairbury to Ottawa, making Pontiac a point on the road.

The meeting was organized by appointing John Dehner, Chairman, and S. C. Ladd, Secretary. The meeting was well attended, and a deep feeling was manifested on the part of the audience by their attention and interest in what was said. The speakers entered also into the subject with warmth, and the matter was discussed until a late hour. A committee of five was appointed to gather information on the subject, correspond with or visit parties to obtain facts, and draft a plan of operation, and report to a subsequent meeting, to be called as soon as the committee is able to make a report. The committee consists of S. L. Flemming, N. Buck, J. W. Strevell, James Stout and S. C. Ladd. The meeting adjourned without day.

S. C. LADD, Secretary.

PONTIAC, November 22d, 1866.

## **John Dehner an Officer in New Railroad Corporation Approved by the Illinois State Legislature in 1867**

In 1867, a book was published with the title of *Private Laws of the State of Illinois Passed by the Twenty-Fifth General Assembly convened January 7, 1867 Volume II*. In 1867, the Illinois Legislature approved the incorporation of 86 new railroads in Illinois.

One of these new railroads approved was called “An Act to incorporate the Fairbury, Pontiac and Northwestern Railway Company.” Some excerpts from this lengthy law are shown below.

Section 1. Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly, that Samuel L. Fleming, Nelson Buck, Jonathan Duff, William Strawn, R. B. Harrington, B. P. Babcock, S. C. Crane, John Dehner, S. C. Ladd, Walter Cornell, M. E. Collins, R. Plumb, Enoch Lundy, David McIntosh, H. L. Marsh, W. G. McDowell, J. W. Strevell, J. B. Tyler, William B. Lyon, of Livingston county, Illinois, and their associates and successors, are hereby created a body corporate and politic, under the name and style of “The Fairbury, Pontiac, and Northwestern Railway Company.”

And said company are hereby authorized and empowered to locate, construct and complete a railroad, commencing at or near Fairbury, in Livingston County, thence to Pontiac in said county, and then northwestwardly, to the most feasible point on the line of the Ottawa, Oswego and Fox River Valley Railroad, for an intersection therewith, to be determined by said company; with one or more tracks or lines of rails. Said company shall commence the construction of said road in good faith within three years, and shall complete the same within ten years.

This complete legal act is six pages long. The entire legal act creating this railroad can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/4bmvtmt5>.

## **The Fairbury, Pontiac, and Northwestern Railway Company Eventually Became the Chicago & Paducah Railroad**

The 1878 history book has a description of how this railroad eventually became the Chicago & Paducah Railroad.

The road now known as the Chicago & Paducah has a local history, it being a Livingston County corporation. In 1865, Mr. Samuel L. Fleming, of Pontiac, a man who had spent a small fortune in railroading, drew, and got passed by the Legislature, a charter for a railroad from Ottawa to Fairbury. The incorporators' named in the charter were S. C. Ladd, B. P. Babcock, Samuel L. Fleming, Nelson Buck. Jonathan Duff, Wm. Strawn, R. B. Harrington, S. C. Crane, John Dehner, Walter Cornell, M. E. Collins., Ralph Plumb, Enoch Lundy, David McIntosh, H. L. Marsh, W. G. McDowell, J. W. Strevell, I. B. Tyler, and Wm. B. Lyon.

In 1867, the charter was amended so that the road might run anywhere northerly and southerly of Pontiac-that point being retained. The name, however, in the charter was retained. Under the impetus given to railroad building by the "grab law " of 1869. the company was formed, M. E. Collins being elected President and S. S. Lawrence, Secretary.

The townships of Indian Grove, Avoca, Eppard's Point, Owego, Pontiac, Amity and Newtown issued bonds, and with these in hand the Fairbury, Pontiac & Northwestern Company made a contract with Col. Ralph Plumb, of Streator, Col. W. H. W. Cushman, of Ottawa, and David Strawn, to build and equip the road, transferring to them all the bonds and issuing the stock to them, so that when built it became theirs.

In this contract was a stipulation that the parties of the second part would never transfer the road to the Chicago & Alton R. R. Co.; the intent being, of course, to keep this a competing road.

They built the road from Streator through this county, pushing it south through Ford, Champaign, Piatt, Moultrie, Shelby and Effingham Counties to Altamont.

Its stations in this county are Newtown. Cornell, Rowe, Pontiac, McDowell, Lodemia, Fairbury. Murphy's and Strawn. It connects at Streator with the Ottawa branch of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. It has forty-one miles of track in the county.

This railroad remained in service until some time in the 1970s when it was shut down and the tracks removed.

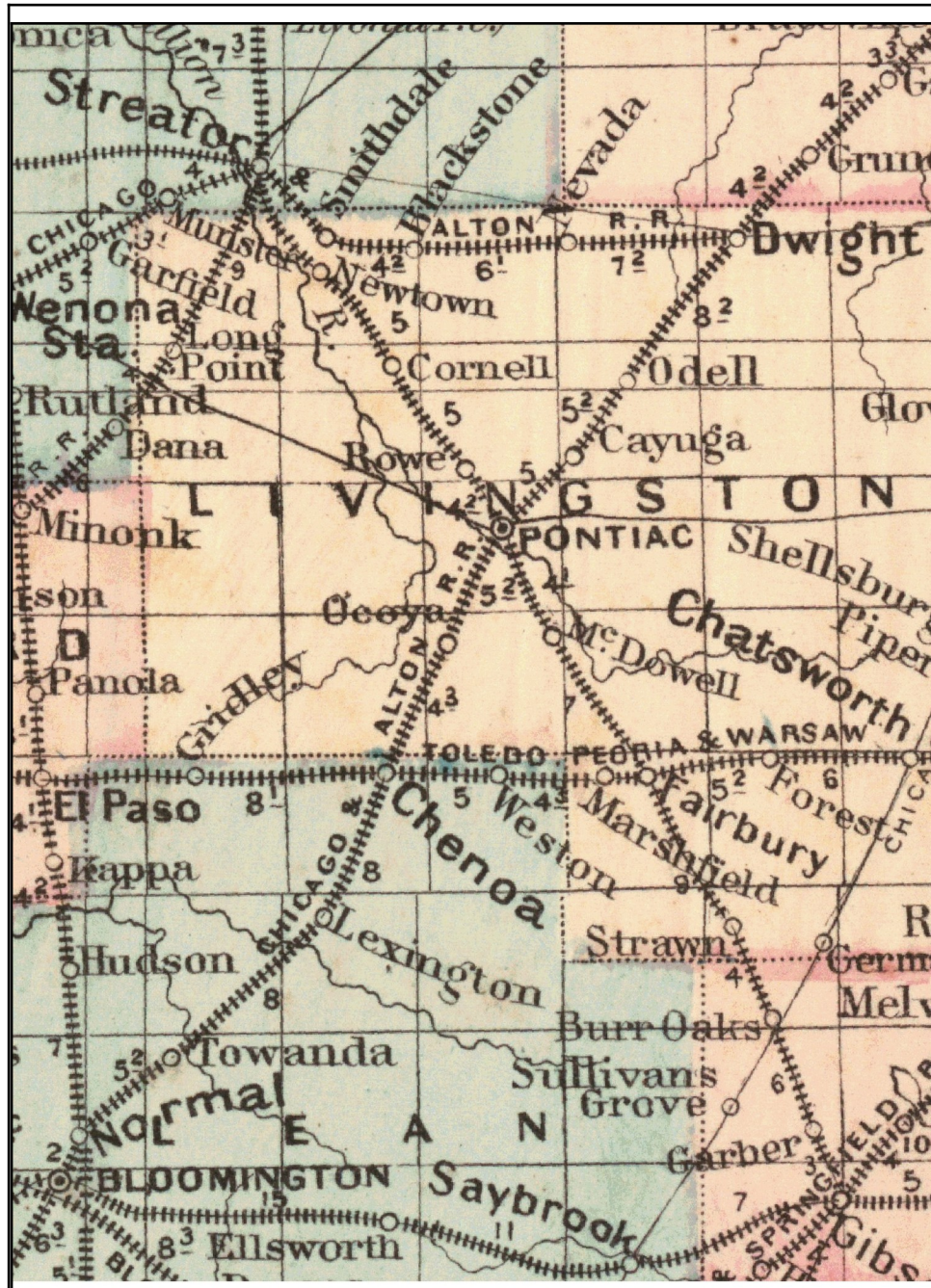
### **Boys Reformatory Facility Secured for Pontiac by Senator Jason W. Strevell**

Jason W. Strevell was another leading citizen of Pontiac in this era. He served two terms in the Illinois State House and one term as an Illinois State Senator. While he was a State Senator, Mr. Strevell is credited with having the Illinois State Boy's Reformatory built at Pontiac. The February 27, 1871 Pantagraph reported that Mr. Strevell introduced an appropriation bill for the Reform School. His bill was referred to the Finance Committee.



## 1875 Railroad Map Showing Two Railroads Going Through Pontiac

This map shows the Chicago & Alton railroad built in 1854. It also shows the Chicago & Paducah Railroad built in 1872. The branch from Fairbury to Strawn was removed around 1874. The TP&W was run through Fairbury in 1857.



1875 Railroad Map



### **John Dehner Also Did Business in Chenoa**

The 1879 History of McLean County book published information about John Dehner doing business in Chenoa.

After Louis Zeigler revisited his native country (Germany), in 1873, in company with John Dehner, of Pontiac, purchased the Chenoa Flour Mill, and ran it till 1876, when that was destroyed by fire.

### **John Dehner and Sawmill in Cornell**

The May 10, 1876 Pantagraph published a story about John Dehner possibly building a sawmill in Cornell.

#### **PONTIAC.**

If the people of Cornell will give the ground and \$1,000, John Dehner will build a \$8,000 mill. And who wouldn't? Its probably the people won't give that \$1,000 and lot to Dehner tomorrow.

Note that \$1,000 in 1876 would be equivalent to \$28,211 in today's dollars. The \$8,000 cost of the mill would be equivalent to \$225,000 in today's dollars.

## John Dehner Helped in Effort to Have New State Asylum Built in Pontiac

The State of Illinois created many different mental health and reformatories in the era of the 1870s. In 1877, a book was published with the title of *Reports Made to the General Assembly of Illinois at the Thirtieth Regular Session.*

The Table of Contents in this book listed facilities that were already built and facilities planned to be built. A list of these facilities is shown below.

Southern Hospital for the Insane  
Commissioners to Construct the Southern Hospital for the Insane  
Asylum for Feeble Minded Children  
Institution for the Blind  
Soldier's Orphan's Home  
Charitable Eye and Ear Infirmary  
State Reform School  
Institution for the Deaf and Dumb

The State Reform School referred to in the Table of Contents was the Boy's Reformatory at Pontiac. The trustees of this institution presented their report for the period from December 1, 1874 through September 30, 1876.

The State of Illinois passed legislation authorizing a new asylum for feeble minded children. The Commissioners for this project asked cities in Illinois to send in bids for land they would offer to have this facility built on. A list of the lands offered and the prices for this land are included in the Appendix section of this book. This Appendix is titled *Report of the Board of Commissioners Appointed by the Governor to Select a Site and Plans for the Illinois Asylum for Feeble-Minded Children.*

The bids submitted by Pontiac are shown below.

Wm. Gore, 80 acres for \$3,000.  
Wm. Gore, 100 acres for \$4,000.  
Wm. Gore, 120 acres for \$5,500.  
John Dehner, 80 acres for \$3,000.

### PONTIAC.

Wm. Gore, 80 acres, for.....	\$3,000
Wm. Gore, 100 acres, for.....	4,000
Wm. Gore, 120 acres, for.....	5,500
Wm. Gore, 160 acres, for.....	8,500
John Dehner, 80 acres, for.....	3,000
John Dehner, 100 acres, for.....	3,500
John Dehner, 120 acres, for.....	5,000
John Dehner, 160 acres, for.....	7,500
John Dehner, 200 acres, for.....	10,000
John Dehner, 215 acres, per acre.....	70
S. C. Crane, 40 to 160 acres, per acre.....	100
A. Weider, 80 acres, per acre.....	90

During the site selection process, the commissioners held a meeting at the Phoenix Hotel in Pontiac. After the meeting, the Commissioners visited the existing Boy's Reformatory facility in Pontiac.

The Commissioners finally selected Lincoln, Illinois, to be the site for the new asylum.

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES.

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HON. JOHN L. BEVERIDGE, *Governor of Illinois.*

SIR:—Having been appointed by your Excellency as trustees of the Illinois Asylum for Feeble Minded Children, and having been convened by your order at Springfield, August 26th, 1875, after being duly qualified, the board was organized by the election of Graham Lee as president, and the continuance of the superintendent of the asylum as secretary.

The act passed by the twenty-ninth general assembly, making appropriations for land and for the construction of buildings for this asylum, approved April 8th, 1875, provided that a board of seven commissioners should select a site and farm for said buildings, of not less than forty acres of land, and further directed and required said board to cause to be prepared suitable plans and specifications by a competent architect, in accordance with the first section of the act.

After a careful survey of the state, visiting nearly every place to which they were invited, the board of commissioners selected and contracted with Messrs. Latham & Wyatt, of Lincoln, Logan county, for forty acres of land, for the sum of seven thousand, five hundred dollars, and notified the board of trustees of that fact by letter, on the 26th of August, 1875.

### **John Dehner Family Moves to Missouri in 1878**

The January 11, 1878 Pantagraph published a notice saying that John Dehner was moving to Missouri.

“Uncle” John Dehner has bought a farm in southwest Missouri, and expects to go there in March.

### **John Dehner Sold His Land in Chenoa**

The June 18, 1878 Pantagraph reported that John Dehner sold his land in Chenoa.

—John Dehner and wife to Daniel E. Eglar, warranty deed, dated August 17, 1877. Consideration, \$1,000. Conveys lot 3 and part lot 2, block 4, Matthew T. Scott’s 2<sup>nd</sup> addition in Chenoa.

In 1878, John Dehner was 71 years of age. His wife, Jane Dehner, was 79 years of age.

### **John Dehner Not Missing**

The September 6, 1878 Pantagraph published the story below.

A recent report that “Uncle” John Dehner (now of Missouri) had disappeared from his home, seems to be contradicted. He is said to have only gone to Hot Springs for his health.

### **Jane Dehner Dies in Missouri in 1879**

Jane Jones, wife of John Dehner, died on October 10, 1879, in Carthage, Missouri. Mrs. Dehner was 80 years of age when she died. Husband John Dehner was 72 years old when his wife died.

### **John Dehner Dies in Missouri in 1880**

Just 11 months after his wife died, John Dehner died on September 24, 1880, in Pierce City, Missouri at the age of 73.

### **Mysteries:**

\*\*\*\*\*no death notice or obit found in ancestry, newspapers.com, genealogybank.com, or Pantagraph. Maybe in pontiac sentinel at library on micro fiche?

\*\*\*\*also, where are they buried, pontiac or missouri?

\*\*how did an immigrant from Prussia have enough money to pay cash for all the land he bought in Indiana?

\*\*waiting on more info about Jane Jones and her 1<sup>st</sup> husband's death from Wisconsin Historical society

\*1937 book about inventory of liv. co. records has more info about John Dehner and his role in building first co. jail. I think there is copy of this book in Dungeon

\*\*add family tree diagram of Dehner family and descendants

\*\*is Jones House shown on 1869 bird's eye view of Pontiac?

\*\*is Jones house shown on early Sanborn maps of Pontiac?

\*\*show map where Henry Weed was first owner of what is now Pontiac

\*\* check complete abstract in Pontiac box lockbox for house/lot ownership history

\*\*go to basement of old courthouse and get property tax records for Jones House, and also for first brick house in Pontiac to see which Jones owned the 1<sup>st</sup> house